



BLM Resource Advisory Councils

Partners Across The West

COLORADO NORTHWEST RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2008-05

Resolution in Support of Changes to the National Fire Policy resulting from the 2008 Policy Test

Whereas: The Colorado Northwest Resource Advisory Council has a long history of supporting appropriate management of wildland fire.

Whereas: Federal agency policy guidance established in 2003 may have narrowed policy interpretation and restricted the application of a full spectrum of fire management strategies.

Whereas: Wildland fire can be used to accomplish resource benefits such as improving wildlife habitat, restoring more natural vegetative regimes, and reducing heavy fuel loads.

Whereas: Current policy limits the ability of managers to effectively use fire to achieve resource benefits because rehabilitation funds are not available for wildfires that are not suppressed.

Whereas: The Upper Colorado River Fire Interagency Management Unit and the Northwest Colorado Interagency Fire Management Unit both took part in a national fire "policy test" intended to evaluate policy changes that would allow wildland fires to be managed for more than one objective; and the experience gained by these pilot units will be used to draft guidance for policy revision to be implemented in 2009.

Whereas: Such a policy change would move towards strengthening the cost-effectiveness of fire management by increasing fire use for resource benefits while reducing hazardous fuel accumulation.

Therefore be it Resolved that the Northwest Resource Advisory Council supports policy changes to the 2003 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy that incorporates the 2008 national pilot findings, including:

1. Increased use of fire for resource benefit
2. More use of a "full spectrum" of strategies
3. Creation of a simpler, clear policy
4. More options for managers
5. Better analysis and modeling tools

Be it further resolved that the NW RAC supports the adequate or increased funding of federal, state and local entities responsible for managing wildland fire and the use of a full spectrum of strategies including fuel reduction efforts to manage fire and fuel loads. The NW RAC strongly recommends funding for rehabilitation, where appropriate, in areas where fire has been managed for resource benefit.

Be it further resolved that the NW RAC acknowledges that impacts to air quality will occur as a result of this management, but these impacts are necessary to limit more severe impacts from larger fires that would result from greater fuel build-up.

Passed, approved and adopted August 21, 2008.

Received by Designated Federal Officer
Catherine Robertson

Dave Cesark, Chair
Northwest Resource Advisory Council